Wet summer could end with a bang

29 August 2008

Forecasters at the Met Office are predicting that that final day of the summer could end with heavy rain and thunderstorms affecting some parts of the country this weekend.

Very warm conditions with temperatures peaking at 27 °C in some southern and eastern areas of England are expected, although thunderstorms are likely to develop, mainly during Sunday.

The return to unsettled weather will mark the end of the meteorological summer which has been one of the wettest on record across the UK.

The National Climate Information Centre at the Met Office has provided the following figures that show the extent of the rain around the country so far this summer.

Rainfall for the UK, Summer 2008

	Total summer rainfall 1 June - 26 August 2008	Long-term average (1971-2000) 1 June - 31 August	Current ranking for summer 2008 rainfall	Year of wettest summer on record (since 1914)	Wettest summer total rainfall
UK	317.7 mm	226.9 mm	7th	1956	358.4 mm
England	261.9 mm	183.9 mm	10th	2007	325.3 mm
Scotland	371.5 mm	284.9 mm	10th	1985	453.6 mm
Wales	411.7 mm	270.6 mm	9th	1927	499.5 mm
Northern Ireland	392.7 mm	236.3 mm	2nd	1958	404.0 mm

Within the UK some local rainfall records have been broken, especially across parts of Northern Ireland and Scotland where flooding severely affected road and rail transport. Provisional rainfall figures show that Northern Ireland had its wettest August since 1914.

The Met Office is now able to pinpoint extreme rainfall more accurately, thanks to improvements of its research and development programme.

A combined team of hydrological and Met Office forecasters based in Exeter used the latest technology to deliver integrated warnings for emergency responders, including those in Northern Ireland during the August flooding.

The high rainfall totals have been mirrored by low sunshine figures, with the UK on course to record one of its dullest August months. There were some chinks of light for what is usually one of the UK's least sunny spots, as Shetland faired well with over 150 hours of sunshine recorded so far this month. This compared to some other parts of the country which have so far failed to exceed 100 hours during August.

More about climate and weather statistics in the UK

Notes

- Meteorologically, summer is regarded as the months of June, July and August.

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